



The Metropolitan Community Church

AT MOBILE

4500 BIT AND SPUR ROAD

MOBILE, ALABAMA 36608

Rev. MARGE RAGONA

(205) 476-9142

Pastor

VOLUME I, No.3

November 1985

NEWSLETTER

It may seem that we're leaning heavily on "What's an MCC?" this month. A couple of things prompt us to do so. We have heard questions and remarks made to some church members asking why we have our own church, for example. Or remarks such as, "You queens are just playing church."

It's not the church that matters, but the message the church offers. That brings us to our second reason for telling about ourselves again this month. For those of you who have encountered the street preachers (Bible-thumper types) downtown, you already know the message THEY preach, "Hell and damnation for our community unless we repent of our sexual sins."

A small group of us at MCC at Mobile took on the street preachers. Channel 10's 10 o'clock news, at the request of Jim at CPA, also arrived to document the occasion. For one weekend, we carried placards that said things like, "Bigotry never won anyone to Christ," "I am a Christian Lesbian," and "Born gay and born again." It began to shake them that there was some opposition to their constant harassment and condemnation and they brought in reinforcements. Still the old message went on, that of hatred for Catholics, Jews, and Gays. MCC felt that we had the "good news of the Gospel," while they had the "bad news of the Gospel," their God was the same old God holding humanity over the lake of fire, waiting to drop the last sinner in. We feel and felt differently, and were willing to challenge them to "Judge not, lest they be judged by the same measure where with they judged."

We are not sure we won -- or if in a situation such as this that there is ever a winner. We believe in their right to preach the gospel -- but we insist that they preach the whole gospel. God is not just the judge, but is also the God of love who welcomes the sinner (remember the Prodigal?) home.

If we could advise our adversaries, our advice would be, if you're going to preach to gay people, at least, let them see the love of God and the acceptance of God -- tune down your constant cry of condemnation -- and try to walk in our shoes for just a little way. You'd be surprised how many pebbles and how often we stumble, but like the scripture says, we have learned that "Those who wait upon our God shall renew their strength. They shall mount up on wings as eagles. They shall run and not be weary. They shall walk and not faint." God go with you.

YPS, I want to help ICM Nixia City. Here's my gift of \$ _____
to help sisters and brothers affected by the earthquake.



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FROM THE EDITOR-- Thanksgiving

Customarily in MCC, we have a Thanksgiving evening service, with an offering. We prepare for that offering by fasting the Wednesday before Thanksgiving, and giving what we would have spent for food. That offering is usually given to a cause which feeds, clothes, or houses the needy. This year, because of the tragedy in Mexico, MCC at Mobile's offering will go to ICM Mexico City. Anyone wishing to be part of that offering -- and particularly we ask our sisters to reach out to bring a measure of comfort to Virginia Carrizales by giving an offering in the name of Magdalena -- may send a check made out to ICM Mexico City and we will forward it to them. God bless you all for your love to these our brothers and sisters.

In our prayers this Thanksgiving let us include the following:

--The people of South Africa and their leaders, who, under great threat, are leading their people to equality and justice.

--The children of Africa, who, in large numbers, are facing starvation.

--Those in our country who are unemployed, mentally ill, or who for no fault of their own are facing the coming winter as homeless and hungry people. They are not there by choice, but the largest number are there because they are deinstitutionalized mentally ill unable to care for themselves who become "bag ladies" or derelict men. Some are gay. Let each of us, in our own way, make a personal commitment to help, as we can, those who cannot help themselves.

--Gay men and women who are in prisons for sexual offenses -- many for prostitution, soliciting, sex with persons under legal age, or other quasi-illegal offenses in which there is no victim, except the person in prison. Pray that our laws will be changed to be more just and more compassionate.

Check it Out

NBC, Channel 10, 8-10 p.m. "An Early Frost" a movie dealing with a family whose son has AIDS. First TV fictional production dealing with AIDS. Stars Gena Rowlands, Ben Gazzara, Sylvia Sidney, Sidney Wash, Bill Paxton, Aidan Quinn.

Some books which our spy at the library has suggested are: **FROM THE BOOK SHELF**

Scroggs, Robin: The New Testament and Homosexuality: Contextual background for contemporary debate. Fortress Press, 1983.

"Scroggs argues that the New Testament does not address today's 'gay concerns', and that it should not be twisted to make it fit..."

Schultenburg, Joy: Gay Parenting. Doubleday/Anchor, Nov. 1985.

Krieger, Susan: The Mirror Dance; Identity in a Women's Community., Temple University Press, 1983.

Grahn, Judy: Another mother tongue; gay words, gay worlds. Beacon Press, 1984.

"Excellent. History of words and language in relation to Lesbians and gay men." (This one is available in the library, call # 306.766 G.)

Borhek, Mary V. Coming out to parents; a two-way survival guide for lesbians and gay men and their parents. Pilgrim Press, 1983. (This, too, is in the library, call # 646.78B.)

Gantz, Joe: Whose child cries; children of gay parents talk about their lives. Galmar Press, 1983.

REVIEW-THE ROCKY HORROR SHOW

November 16, 1985. Presented by the Order of Osiris and the Esquire House.

Chairman of the Production Greg
Director Neal
Set Design & Construction Grace
Evelyn

Costume Design & Execution Neal
Robert
Gary
Tom
Chuck
Al
Mike
Randy

Hair Design
Make Up

Music and Lights

CAST
Frankenfurter
Columbia
Brad
Janet
Rocky
Narrator
Magenta
Riff-Raff
Eddie
Dr. Scott
Bride
Groom
Bridesmaids

Mother of the Bride
Idiot

You may wonder why we listed the stage crew first. They did a magnificent job and because of such a first-rate effort the task was made easier for the cast of the production.

WELL DONE OSIRIS AND ESQUIRE!! Two people in our party knew the movie by heart -- even knew the words to every song. High praise on every aspect of the production was given.

It is impossible to single out any one cast member as a show stealer -- each one stole the show at one point or another.

It proves that our community is loaded with talent, as the Rocky Horror Show so amply demonstrated. Let's have more.

AZALEA CITY FLORIST

Say it with flowers, Say it with ours
433-3038
George Coulter, Owner
New customer credit always welcome

NEWS

FRANCE PASSES PROTECTION BILL

Paris. France became the first nation to prohibit antigay discrimination on a national scale. The bill, which includes racial and religious minorities as well, prohibits discrimination in housing, employment and access to government services. Originally passed by the General Assembly, the bill was then defeated in the opposition-controlled Senate, but that veto was subsequently overridden by the General Assembly. (In the French Government, the General Assembly has the ultimate decision-making power.) The bill will become law as soon as it is published in the Official Journal of the Legislature.

CHURCHES SUPPORT FEDERAL BILL

Washington. Eleven different denominations sent a joint letter to the members of the U.S. Congress in support of the national gay and lesbian civil rights bill, HR 230. The letter was signed by the representatives of the Church of the Brethren, United Methodist Church, Lutheran Council in the U.S.A., the Presbyterian Church, United Church of Christ, Episcopal Church, and Union of American Hebrew Congregations, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Unitarian-Universalist Association, American Ethical Union, and National Council of Churches. Though acknowledging that some of the traditions represented opposed the practice of homosexuality, the letter said that they all "maintain strong support for the protection of basic civil and human rights of all persons." The letter was coordinated by Ralph Watkins, Legislative Counsel of the Church of the Brethren, who said, "We have been offended that the public portrayal of religious perspectives on this issue has focused almost exclusively on negative, anti-gay sentiments."

OSIRIS NEWS

The Order of Osiris moves on target to the celebration of its 5th Annual Mardi Gras Ball, February 7, 1986.

Attire for the ball is formal. Tuxedos and tails of all colors are permitted. All gowns must be floor length.

Tickets go on sale Thanksgiving weekend. Contact an Osiris member as soon as possible. Remember, they are in limited supply

ANGLICANS ELECT PRESIDING BISHOP Anaheim. Stating that the chief operating motto of the church should be "There are no outcasts," the new chief pastor of the Episcopal Church graciously accepted his election September 10, 1985. The Right Reverend Raymond Lee Browning was elected presiding bishop and primate of the 2.7 million member Episcopal Church. With a reputation of broad international experience and support of gay ordination and opposition to the nuclear arms race, Bishop Browning is a member of Integrity (an organization of gay Episcopalians and their friends) and was among the group of Episcopal prelates to dissent publicly from the church's 1979 decision barring the ordination of "practicing homosexuals."

We met at

DATE 11

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Weekdays - Noon Till

Weekends - 24 hours

FOR SALE: SCM Electric Typewriter, ribbon spool. Best offer. Evenings 8-10. 342-7891, ask for John.

PLUMBING - Indoors, reasonable rates. Expert service. Call evenings after 6, or Mondays, 476-5171, as for Harry.

CLEANING-INTERIOR PAINTING, WALLPAPER. Organize your precious collectibles?? Excellent references in both communities. 476-9142, ask for Shirley.

BOWLING LEAGUE -- Members of MCC want to form a bowling team to hopefully compete against other gay groups (bars, etc.). At least six teams are needed. Call the HELPLINE if you are interested.

COMMUNITY PROFILE

Have you ever noticed that particular gleam some people have in their eyes. firmly believe that people who are DOERS always have it.

Mobile is loaded with talented DOERS. Certainly topping the list is Danni B. Since coming out six years ago, she has put together a long list of accomplishments for our community. Danni was instrumental in putting together our first Gay Pride Celebration Week in 1984. She and Harry put Pride together again in 1985.

The Order of Osiris has certainly enjoyed her energies and talents; Board of Directors sine 1982, 3rd VP, Queen of the Club 1983-84, President of the Order 1984-85, Ball Captain 1985-86. In her spare time Danni also works at Club Paradise.

More than most of us, Danni feels the pulse of our community through her employment and community activities. She strongly praises the openness and friendliness of our community compared to others like Atlanta, New Orleans, Birmingham, etc. Also she feels that our local clubs offer each of us solid support and appreciation.

An interesting situation she encounters at the Club is the total openness of younger people think "It's OK to be young and gay, but the older crowd, 30 and up, can't be old and gay." As an example, many of the younger crowd bring their straight friends with them, which in turn threatens the older crowd, because of the same old fears and oppressions from family, employers, friends, etc.

"It's still the same: so many of our people can't afford (they think) to be seen downtown." Danni adds, "We need more places to meet, less threatening, if there is such. We also need to band together and take a stand somewhere. A good place to start is to repeal the entertainer's card for all employees of gay clubs." (More on this in later issues.)

A few observations now about Osiris by Danni -- "Osiris has the largest membership ever, and is growing. I feel now we are at a turning point as we celebrate our fifth year. We have new, younger members joining, and we should go on forever. I feel in the next few years there will be other societies formed as a result of Osiris' success."

Danni is a leader. She works long hours for us. We need more leaders like her, willing to pull their share of the load and move our community ahead.



476-9142

Gay
Help-line

SOCIETY

MISS BETTY - OWNER
51 S. CONCEPTION ST.
433-9141

SUN. - THURS. 10 A. M. - 2 A. M.
FRI. - SAT. OPEN 24 HOURS

TROOPERS

215 Conti Street
438-9139

HOURS: 11 a.m. - 3 a.m.



Club Paradise

JIM CRISS
General Manager

87 S. Joachim St.
Mobile, AL 36602
(205) 433-9136
(205) 433-9135

ESQUIRE
BAR & LOUNGE

- Phone 433-9175 -
Mon.-Fri. 9:30 a.m. Till
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13 South Joachim St. Mobile, Ala.



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Pastor

VOLUME 1, No. 1

September 1, 1985

HELLO! Welcome to our new MCC Newsletter, which we hope will be interesting, enlightening, and maybe even fun to read.

...from the pastor

WHAT'S AN MCC?

Many people ask us what MCC is all about. People see us running around town, we seem to be having a good time, and they know we "do church," but at the same time it's hard to know how MCC is different from other churches -- or for that matter, how it's the same as other churches.

When I was in seminary we were taught that if you really wanted to know what a religious body was all about, you could look at five characteristics, and to make it easy, it was taught in terms of 5 C's: Credo (beliefs), Canon (holy writings), Code (ethical practices or moral precepts), Cultus (worship practices), and Corpus (the body of believers to whom they addressed themselves). We can look at MCC in terms of these five characteristics to see who we are also.

CREDO: We are Trinitarians, believing in God as creator of all things, prime mover of the universe and ground of our being. We follow Jesus and his teaching of love and forgiveness. We believe in the efficacy of prayer and the presence in the world and within each of us of the Holy Spirit, leading and directing our lives. We believe in the doctrine of justification by grace through faith, and through Christ's death on Calvary that we are saved by that grace.

CANON: We are Christians who believe the Bible is the inspired word of God, relating one people's walk through history with that God; and that Jesus is foretold in the Old Testament, presented in the New Testament, and upheld in scripture as a model for our lives. We further believe that the Bible holds out a picture of a God who loves and welcomes all people, particularly the oppressed. As gay people, we find, through current scholarship, that many of the things previously thought about the contents of the Bible are being seen differently and that many of our fears are dispelled as new knowledge makes ancient writings more understandable and truer to the intended meaning.

CODE: We believe that we are saved from despair and degradation by an act of love and forgiveness on the part of Jesus. Therefore, we are called to act in response to that love and forgiveness. Our every act must be rooted in love of God, love of neighbor, and true love of self which exists because we are made in the image of God. We try to live the teachings of Jesus, embodying his love for all people in acts of service, forgiveness and community. We offer no pronouncements of how it "ought" to be, but seek a place of liberation where all people are called to respond, each in a responsible way, to Christ's teachings. We seek to lessen the alienation (and the acts of alienation) from God, neighbor, and self, thus freeing ourselves to be whole people.

CULTUS: We worship weekly, serving communion at each worship service in a liturgy which is both simple and historical. We sing hymns from all Christian traditions, preach a theology of Liberation, yet seek a deep personal salvation
(continued on page 2)

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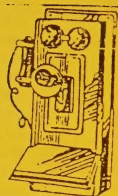
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FROM THE EDITOR--

Welcome to the Metropolitan Community Church at Mobile's first newsletter. We plan to publish monthly, and would like to invite you to be on our mailing list. To do so, please fill out the coupon on the bottom of the Calendar, and drop it to us in the mail. Also, mention us to your friends. They may want to receive the newsletter also.

Our purpose is to become a source of news and information for the entire gay community. Of course, the majority of information will pertain to MCC, but we also want to include news and events from Osiris, NOW, the Unitarians, the bars and any other gay supportive groups in the area. We feel Mobile needs more community public relations, and we hope we can achieve that.

We need a name for this newsletter -- brainstorm -- YOU CAN DO IT! Tell us what you think we ought to call ourselves.

We also value contributions from individuals and community organizations. A community events calendar will be included monthly to let people know what's going on. We would like organizations to submit articles about their activities and purposes. We want individuals to submit newsworthy items, editorial replies, statements of interest or concern, entertaining features or artwork, or any other valuable information.

We want to make our editorial policy known to contributors: We require that a name and address be submitted along with the news copy for publication. We will not print anyone's name or address, however, without explicit written consent. We make this requirement, however, to protect the legal status of the church.

Please drop copy or editorial replies at the church or mail them to: MCC NEWSLETTER, P.O. Box 8524, Mobile, Ala. 36608. The deadline for all copy is the third Monday of each month.

...from the pastor

experience, and practice an open eucharist (communion/Lord's Supper) to which all are invited to come, alone, with a friend, or with a lover.

CORPUS: Because Gay Christians are often the stepchildren of the family of God we in MCC speak primarily to the gay community, calling our brothers and sisters to join us in worship, social activities, and service to others who need and will accept our help. We do not discourage nonGays from joining us, but speak primarily to gays and Lesbians because no other Christian body holds them up to God with the same primacy.

If you find this kind of church interesting, why not join us some Sunday evening (or at some other activity) and see for yourself how we live out our beliefs.

Rev. Marge Ragona, Pastor

AIDS ANTIBODY TEST

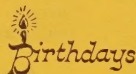
The antibody test for the AIDS virus is given by appointment at Mobile County Health Clinic on Monday afternoons. Give them a call and ask to speak with Billy Litchfield, who will schedule the appointment and give you an identifying test number. You go in Building 4, which is in the rear yard of the old Marine Hospital; enter off Bayou Street. Simply tell the receptionist you are "Number Four" and that you are there to see Billy. He will explain that you can remain only a number throughout the whole testing procedure. It takes about 2 weeks for the results to return.



Thank You

MISS BETTY ALSO WANTS
TO THANK HER LOYAL AND
FAITHFUL EMPLOYEES.

THANKS TO THE COMMUNITY
FOR MAKING MY 10TH
ANNIVERSARY A ROARING
SUCCESS. Miss Betty



HAPPY BIRTHDAY, GRACE
(ESQUIRE) SEPT. 5TH.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, GUYS!

THE COMMUNITY WISHES
JOHN AT THE CORRAL A
BELATED BIRTHDAY
GREETING (AUGUST 28).



LABOR DAY WEEKEND
SHOW, AUGUST 31, SEPT. 1,
AND 2 -- SOCIETY.
NO COVER CHARGE, 10:00
AND MIDNIGHT.

SEPTEMBER 13TH & 14TH
TURNABOUT NIGHT-SOCIETY
9:00 and 11:00 p.m.
NO COVER.

FOR ALL YOU POOL PLAY-
ERS, SOCIETY NOW HAS
POOL TOURNAMENTS ON
FRIDAYS AND SUNDAYS.

EVERYONE START PLANNING
TO ATTEND THE "ROCKY
HORROR SHOW" IN NOV.,
PRESENTED BY THE ORDER
OF OSIRIS & THE ESQUIRE
HOUSE.

community events

WELCOME TO MCC MOBILE

Metropolitan Community Church of Mobile is still just a baby, born March 10, 1985. Our growth has been steady; starting with 6 members, we now have 17 and many more who attend from time to time. Each worship service we see new faces as the word spreads that we are here. For some months we worshipped without music, but now an organist has found us, and our music program is taking form. The worship services on Sunday evening at 7:00 p.m. at 4500 Bit and Spur Road, and our weekly rap sessions are certainly the root of our activities. But from time to time, other activities take place. Our visibility in the community was greatly enhanced during Gay Pride Week; particularly Gay Pride Sunday. MCC sponsored the Trivial Pursuit party at the Corral, we were officials at the Fun Run early that morning, we labored all day in the hot sun to prepare those delectable "fag-anitas" and selling those exquisite roses you bought and gave to your lover. We have a number of semi-regular activities like our Trivial Pursuit parties, our "can runs" to Dauphin Island followed by breakfast at Shoney's and our outdoor cookouts. Birthdays are celebrated in grand style, even including a chauffeur-driven limo taking church members for a night on the town, thanks to one member eager to please his lover and share the evening with church friends.

Recently, Mary Moore, lay worship coordinator for our MCC in Birmingham and our Assistant District Coordinator, visited with us and we were privileged to see the MCC videotape, "God, Gays and the Gospel -- This is OUR Story." The film showing was followed by communion, a good discussion, wine and cheese, and a trip downtown to congratulate Grace (Esquire) on her first anniversary. We will be showing that film again on September 15th, when we unveil the Helpline to the community.

We have been training for several months to prepare ourselves for the opening of Mobile's Gay Helpline. We have been indeed fortunate to receive training and support from Mobile Mental Health. The Helpline phone counselors will be able, when training is completed, to steer gay people to many resources, legal, health, mental health, and entertainment. We will also be available to those who need to talk to someone who has "been there," and whose experience and training makes them a valuable sounding board for people experiencing crises in their lives -- relationship breakups, coming out, AIDS fear, etc. We will be officially kicking off the Gay Helpline as you are reading this article, having had our first call in response to an article in the Alabama Forum.

Our core group is comprised of both men and women, singles and couples -- with the ages ranging from 18 to over 60, and all ages in between. We are part of the whole community, with some of us enjoying the bars as well as our Bibles. We are strongly committed to bettering the lives of those in our community.

On Saturday, September 14th, we will introduce MCC to community leaders in religion, mental health, and education and at the same time kick off the Mobile Gay Helpline. In order to let them know more about MCC, we will be showing "God, Gays, and the Gospel," and telling them more about what we envision for the future of the Helpline, so that we can help them as well. You are invited to come to that program, especially if you are a gay person in those fields or are interested in serving on the Helpline. Those who will answer phones will be trained at monthly sessions, as our people have been, and will be encouraged to sign up for at least one night a month from 6:00 p.m. to midnight).

For our other activities, we refer you to the Calendar which is included, along with the flyer giving the discussion topics for the weekly raps. From time to time, especially on Friday and Saturday, we do other things -- like having impromptu Trivial Pursuit or card parties -- and we invite you to call the church phone number to find out what's going on. MCC Mobile is on the move, and we want you to feel welcome to come along with us.

Check it Out

EDITOR'S NOTE: This section is a monthly column listing books, magazine articles, films, etc. of interest to the gay community.

Breaking Silence - Lesbian Nuns by Rosemary Curb and Nancy Monahan.

"AIDS: A Growing Threat", August 12th issue of TIME, p. 40.

"AIDS", August 12th issue of NEWSWEEK, p. 20.

"AIDS in Mobile:...Never take away the hope," by Kathy Jumper in the August 11th issue of PORT CITY MAGAZINE.

News From NOW Lesbian Task Force

NOW Lesbian Task Force has been very active in trying to develop community activities which will interest and enlighten the gay community. Just prior to Gay Pride Week they showed "In the Best Interests of the Children, a film concerned with custody cases and Lesbian mothers. Additionally they have made us aware of two pieces of legislation which are of concern to gays. We will be discussing them in an article in the next issue.

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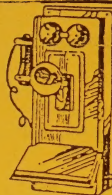
We met at

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#7 S. Joachim St.
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(205) 433-1236
(205) 433-9495

JIM CRISS
General Manager

GAY RAP SERIES

Homosexuality: Rules, Roles & Relationships

- | | |
|-------|---|
| 8/21 | HOMOSEXUAL, BISEXUAL, OR WHAT? |
| 8/28 | TELLING OUR STORY - GAY ORAL HISTORY |
| 9/4 | THE SEARCH FOR PRINCE/PRINCESS PERFECT |
| 9/11 | THE QUEEN'S ENGLISH--TALKING BUTCH /GAY LANGUAGE |
| 9/18 | GAMES PEOPLE PLAY -- IN OUR RELATIONSHIPS |
| 9/25 | HOW WE LOST OUR FAITH -- OUR QUARREL WITH THE CHURCH |
| 10/2 | WHO'S ON TOP -- POWER IN RELATIONSHIPS |
| 10/9 | PEER PRESSURE -- HANDLING YOUR FRIENDS |
| 10/16 | CROSS GENERATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS |
| 10/23 | HOLDING HANDS -- MAKING A POLITICAL STATEMENT |
| 10/30 | HOMOPHOBIA -- THEIRS AND OURS |
| 11/6 | EVERYTHING YOU WANTED TO KNOW -- BUT WERE AFRAID TO ASK |

ALL RAPS ARE HELD AT 2204 OLD GOVERNMENT STREET, AT 7:30 P.M.
ON WEDNESDAY EVENINGS

476-9142

OR CALL FOR MORE INFORMATION

THE RAPS ARE OPEN TO MEN AND WOMEN, EVERYONE MAY
SPEAK FREELY, THE ONLY RULE BEING THAT NO ONE CAN
TELL ANOTHER HOW IT 'OUGHT' TO BE, ONLY HOW IT IS FOR
EACH SPEAKER.

THE RAPS ARE SPONSORED BY

The Metropolitan Community Church

September

DISTRICT
CONFERENCE
IN ATLANTA

UNITARIAN-
UNIVERSALISTS
10:30 every Sun.
MCC WORSHIP
7:00 p. m.

CAN RUN

RAP
THE SEARCH FOR
PRINCE/PRINCESS
PERFECT

GRACE'S B'DAY
(ESQUIRE)

LABOR DAY

JOE'S BIRTHDAY

MCC WORSHIP
7:00 p. m.

RAP
GAY LANGUAGE

HELPLINE
TRAINING

RECEPTION AND
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YES, I WANT TO RECEIVE THE MCC NEWSLETTER

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP _____

October



The Metropolitan Community Church

AT MOBILE

4500 BIT AND SPUR ROAD

MOBILE, ALABAMA 36608

Rev. MARGE RAGONA

(205) 476-9142

Pastor

VOLUME 1, No. 1

September 1, 1985

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...from the pastor

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We want to make our editorial policy known to contributors: We require that a name and address be submitted along with the news copy for publication. We will not print anyone's name or address, however, without explicit written consent. We make this requirement, however, to protect the legal status of the church.

Please drop copy or editorial replies at the church or mail them to:
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If you find this kind of church interesting, why not join us some Sunday evening (or at some other activity) and see for yourself how we live out our beliefs.

Rev. Marge Ragona, Pastor

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The antibody test for the AIDS virus is given by appointment at Mobile County Health Clinic on Monday afternoons. Give them a call and ask to speak with Billy Litchfield, who will schedule the appointment and give you an identifying test number. You go in Building 4, which is in the rear yard of the old Marine Hospital; enter off Bayou Street. Simply tell the receptionist you are "Number Four" and that you are there to see Billy. He will explain that you can remain only a number throughout the whole testing procedure. It takes about 2 weeks for the results to return.



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Birthdays

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, GRACE
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THE COMMUNITY WISHES
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THE ESQUIRE WANTS TO
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LABOR DAY WEEKEND
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NO COVER CHARGE, 10:00
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EVERYONE START PLANNING
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PRESENTED BY THE ORDER
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community events

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Our core group is comprised of both men and women, singles and couples -- with the ages ranging from 18 to over 60, and all ages in between. We are part of the whole community, with some of us enjoying the bars as well as our Bibles. We are strongly committed to bettering the lives of those in our community.

On Saturday, September 14th, we will introduce MCC to community leaders in religion, mental health, and education and at the same time kick off the Mobile Gay Helpline. In order to let them know more about MCC, we will be showing "God, Gays, and the Gospel," and telling them more about what we envision for the future of the Helpline, so that we can help them as well. You are invited to come to that program, especially if you are a gay person in those fields or are interested in serving on the Helpline. Those who will answer phones will be trained at monthly sessions, as our people have been, and will be encouraged to sign up for at least one night a month from 6:00 p.m. to midnight).

For our other activities, we refer you to the Calendar which is included, along with the flyer giving the discussion topics for the weekly raps. From time to time, especially on Friday and Saturday, we do other things -- like having impromptu Trivial Pursuit or card parties -- and we invite you to call the church phone number to find out what's going on. MCC Mobile is on the move, and we want you to feel welcome to come along with us.

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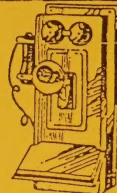
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GAY RAP SERIES

Homosexuality: Rules, Roles & Relationships

- | | |
|-------|--|
| 8/21 | HOMOSEXUAL, BSEXUAL, OR WHAT? |
| 8/28 | TELLING OUR STORY - GAY ORAL HISTORY |
| 9/4 | THE SEARCH FOR PRINCE/PRINCESS PERFECT |
| 9/11 | THE QUEEN'S ENGLISH--TALKING BUTCH /GAY LANGUAGE |
| 9/18 | GAMES PEOPLE PLAY -- IN OUR RELATIONSHIPS |
| 9/25 | HOW WE LOST OUR FAITH -- OUR QUARREL WITH THE CHURCH |
| 10/2 | WHO'S ON TOP -- POWER IN RELATIONSHIPS |
| 10/9 | PEER PRESSURE -- HANDLING YOUR FRIENDS |
| 10/16 | CROSS GENERATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS |
| 10/23 | HOLDING HANDS -- MAKING A POLITICAL STATEMENT |
| 10/30 | HOMOPHOBIA -- THEIRS AND OURS |
| 11/6 | EVER YTHING YOU WANTED TO KNOW -- BUT WERE AFRAID TO ASK |

ALL RAPS ARE HELD AT 2204 OLD GOVERNMENT STREET, AT 7:30 P.M.
ON WEDNESDAY EVENINGS

476-9142

OR CALL FOR MORE INFORMATION

THE RAPS ARE OPEN TO MEN AND WOMEN, EVERYONE MAY
SPEAK FREELY, THE ONLY RULE BEING THAT NO ONE CAN
TELL ANOTHER HOW IT 'OUGHT' TO BE, ONLY HOW IT IS FOR
EACH SPEAKER.

THE RAPS ARE SPONSORED BY

The Metropolitan Community Church

September

DISTRICT
CONFERENCE
IN ATLANTA

UNITARIAN-
UNIVERSALISTS
10:30 every Sun.
MCC WORSHIP
7:00 p. m.

CAN RUN

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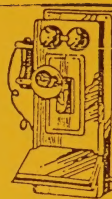
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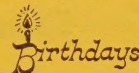
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GAY RAP SERIES

Homosexuality: Rules, Roles & Relationships

- | | |
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September

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1	LABOR DAY 2	3	4	5	6	7
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8	9	10	11	12	13	14
MCC WORSHIP 7:00 p. m.	ROSH HASHONAH		RAP GAMES PEOPLE PLAY-- IN OUR RELATIONSHIPS			
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
MCC WORSHIP 7:00 p. m.			RAP HOW WE LOST OUR FAITH (IN THE STRAIGHT CHURCH)		CLAUDIA'S BIRTHDAY	SHRIMP AND BEER BUST \$3.00 RSVP
22	23	24	YOM KIPPUR 25	26	27	28
VIVIAN'S BIRTHDAY		October	RAP WHO'S ON TOP - POWER IN OUR RELATIONSHIPS	YES, I WANT TO RECEIVE THE MCC NEWSLETTER NAME _____ ADDRESS _____ CITY, STATE, ZIP _____		
MCC WORSHIP 7:00 p. m.						
29	30	1	2			



The Metropolitan Community Church

AT MOBILE

4500 BIT AND SPUR ROAD

MOBILE, ALABAMA 36608

Rev. MARGE RAGONA

(205) 476-9142

Pastor

VOLUME 1, No. 1

September 1, 1985

HELLO! Welcome to our new MCC Newsletter, which we hope will be interesting, enlightening, and maybe even fun to read.

...from the pastor

WHAT'S AN MCC?

Many people ask us what MCC is all about. People see us running around town, we seem to be having a good time, and they know we "do church," but at the same time it's hard to know how MCC is different from other churches -- or for that matter, how it's the same as other churches.

When I was in seminary we were taught that if you really wanted to know what a religious body was all about, you could look at five characteristics, and to make it easy, it was taught in terms of 5 C's: Credo (beliefs), Canon (holy writings), Code (ethical practices or moral precepts), Cultus (worship practices), and Corpus (the body of believers to whom they addressed themselves). We can look at MCC in terms of these five characteristics to see who we are also.

CREDO: We are Trinitarians, believing in God as creator of all things, prime mover of the universe and ground of our being. We follow Jesus and his teaching of love and forgiveness. We believe in the efficacy of prayer and the presence in the world and within each of us of the Holy Spirit, leading and directing our lives. We believe in the doctrine of justification by grace through faith, and through Christ's death on Calvary that we are saved by that grace.

CANON: We are Christians who believe the Bible is the inspired word of God, relating one people's walk through history with that God; and that Jesus is foretold in the Old Testament, presented in the New Testament, and upheld in scripture as a model for our lives. We further believe that the Bible holds out a picture of a God who loves and welcomes all people, particularly the oppressed. As gay people, we find, through current scholarship, that many of the things previously thought about the contents of the Bible are being seen differently and that many of our fears are dispelled as new knowledge makes ancient writings more understandable and truer to the intended meaning.

CODE: We believe that we are saved from despair and degradation by an act of love and forgiveness on the part of Jesus. Therefore, we are called to act in response to that love and forgiveness. Our every act must be rooted in love of God, love of neighbor, and true love of self which exists because we are made in the image of God. We try to live the teachings of Jesus, embodying his love for all people in acts of service, forgiveness and community. We offer no pronouncements of how it "ought" to be, but seek a place of liberation where all people are called to respond, each in a responsible way, to Christ's teachings. We seek to lessen the alienation (and the acts of alienation) from God, neighbor, and self, thus freeing ourselves to be whole people.

CULTUS: We worship weekly, serving communion at each worship service in a liturgy which is both simple and historical. We sing hymns from all Christian traditions, preach a theology of Liberation, yet seek a deep personal salvation

(continued on page 2)

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JIM CRISS
General Manager

FROM THE EDITOR--

Welcome to the Metropolitan Community Church at Mobile's first newsletter. We plan to publish monthly, and would like to invite you to be on our mailing list. To do so, please fill out the coupon on the bottom of the Calendar, and drop it to us in the mail. Also, mention us to your friends. They may want to receive the newsletter also.

Our purpose is to become a source of news and information for the entire gay community. Of course, the majority of information will pertain to MCC, but we also want to include news and events from Osiris, NOW, the Unitarians, the bars and any other gay supportive groups in the area. We feel Mobile needs more community public relations, and we hope we can achieve that.

We need a name for this newsletter -- brainstorm -- YOU CAN DO IT! Tell us what you think we ought to call ourselves.

We also value contributions from individuals and community organizations. A community events calendar will be included monthly to let people know what's going on. We would like organizations to submit articles about their activities and purposes. We want individuals to submit newsworthy items, editorial replies, statements of interest or concern, entertaining features or artwork, or any other valuable information.

We want to make our editorial policy known to contributors: We require that a name and address be submitted along with the news copy for publication. We will not print anyone's name or address, however, without explicit written consent. We make this requirement, however, to protect the legal status of the church.

Please drop copy or editorial replies at the church or mail them to: MCC NEWSLETTER, P.O. Box 8524, Mobile, Ala. 36608. The deadline for all copy is the third Monday of each month.

...from the pastor

experience, and practice an open eucharist (communion/Lord's Supper) to which all are invited to come, alone, with a friend, or with a lover.

CORPUS: Because Gay Christians are often the stepchildren of the family of God we in MCC speak primarily to the gay community, calling our brothers and sisters to join us in worship, social activities, and service to others who need and will accept our help. We do not discourage nonGays from joining us, but speak primarily to gays and Lesbians because no other Christian body holds them up to God with the same primacy.

If you find this kind of church interesting, why not join us some Sunday evening (or at some other activity) and see for yourself how we live out our beliefs.

Rev. Marge Ragona, Pastor

AIDS ANTIBODY TEST

The antibody test for the AIDS virus is given by appointment at Mobile County Health Clinic on Monday afternoons. Give them a call and ask to speak with Billy Litchfield, who will schedule the appointment and give you an identifying test number. You go in Building 4, which is in the rear yard of the old Marine Hospital; enter off Bayou Street. Simply tell the receptionist you are "Number Four" and that you are there to see Billy. He will explain that you can remain only a number throughout the whole testing procedure. It takes about 2 weeks for the results to return.



Thank You

MISS BETTY ALSO WANTS
TO THANK HER LOYAL AND
FAITHFUL EMPLOYEES.

THANKS TO THE COMMUNITY
FOR MAKING MY 10TH
ANNIVERSARY A ROARING
SUCCESS. Miss Betty

in the
hospital

EVERYONE WISHES
EVELYN'S MOTHER A
SPEEDY RECOVERY

Birthdays

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, GRACE
(ESQUIRE) SEPT. 5TH.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, GUYS!

THE ESQUIRE WANTS TO
WISH EDDIE A BELATED
BIRTHDAY GREETING
(AUGUST 24). WE LOVE
YOU.

THE COMMUNITY WISHES
JOHN AT THE CORRAL A
BELATED BIRTHDAY
GREETING (AUGUST 28).



IMPORTANT

LABOR DAY WEEKEND
SHOW, AUGUST 31, SEPT. 1,
AND 2 -- SOCIETY.
NO COVER CHARGE, 10:00
AND MIDNIGHT.

SEPTEMBER 13TH & 14TH
TURNABOUT NIGHT--SOCIETY
9:00 and 11:00 p.m.
NO COVER.

FOR ALL YOU POOL PLAY-
ERS, SOCIETY NOW HAS
POOL TOURNAMENTS ON
FRIDAYS AND SUNDAYS.

EVERYONE START PLANNING
TO ATTEND THE "ROCKY
HORROR SHOW" IN NOV.,
PRESENTED BY THE ORDER
OF OSIRIS & THE ESQUIRE
HOUSE.

community events

WELCOME TO MCC MOBILE

Metropolitan Community Church of Mobile is still just a baby, born March 10, 1985. Our growth has been steady; starting with 6 members, we now have 17 and many more who attend from time to time. Each worship service we see new faces as the word spreads that we are here. For some months we worshipped without music, but now an organist has found us, and our music program is taking form. The worship services on Sunday evening at 7:00 p.m. at 4500 Bit and Spur Road, and our weekly rap sessions are certainly the root of our activities. But from time to time, other activities take place. Our visibility in the community was greatly enhanced during Gay Pride Week; particularly Gay Pride Sunday. MCC sponsored the Trivial Pursuit party at the Corral, we were officials at the Fun Run early that morning, we labored all day in the hot sun to prepare those delectable "fag-anitas" and selling those exquisite roses you bought and gave to your lover. We have a number of semi-regular activities like our Trivial Pursuit parties, our "can runs" to Dauphin Island followed by breakfast at Shoney's and our outdoor cookouts. Birthdays are celebrated in grand style, even including a chauffeur-driven limo taking church members for a night on the town, thanks to one member eager to please his lover and share the evening with church friends.

Recently, Mary Moore, lay worship coordinator for our MCC in Birmingham and our Assistant District Coordinator, visited with us and we were privileged to see the MCC videotape, "God, Gays and the Gospel -- This is OUR Story." The film showing was followed by communion, a good discussion, wine and cheese, and a trip downtown to congratulate Grace (Esquire) on her first anniversary. We will be showing that film again on September 15th, when we unveil the Helpline to the community.

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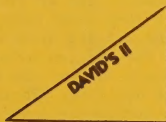


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